

Psychology Internship Handbook 2004-2005 Salt Lake City, Utah



Psychology Internship Handbook VA Salt Lake City Health Care System Salt Lake City, Utah

James R. Floyd,
Medical Center Director

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Chief of Staff

Revised: July 2003
for 2004-2005 Interns

Dear Internship Applicant,

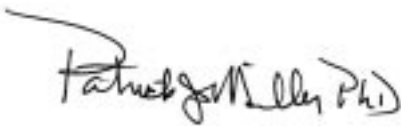
The excellence of internship training at the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is one of the highest priorities of our Psychology Professional Office. Graduate students have been trained here since 1952 and over 300 students have been involved in our program. We enjoy excellent support within the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System and nationally through funding supplied by our VA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Our Psychology Professional Office comprises “state-of-the-art” assessment and treatment programs. The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is the site of the development of a national computer-assisted psychological assessment system which has now been distributed to the entire VA system. Our Behavioral Medicine and Neuropsychology programs are leaders in the field. Our Substance Abuse Treatment Program was one of the first in the VA system and continues to be innovative and energetic. Our inpatient and outpatient mental health programs represent an ideal blend of interdisciplinary input.

It is a distinct privilege for us to have the opportunity to share these professional experiences and programs with the interns who train with us. We enjoy our responsibility to our interns and endeavor to create a positive, collegial atmosphere conducive to learning and growth. We conduct an orientation program to get the year off to a running start and we have a very open feedback system to insure meaningful communication throughout the internship.

We certainly hope that you will give our program a thorough review. As you read through this handbook you may find just what you are looking for in an internship. You may also wish to visit our website at www.va.gov/saltlakecity. It is hard to describe the “character” of a training program in writing, so call, ask questions, and get acquainted! We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Miller Ph.D.", with a stylized flourish above the name.

Patrick Miller, Ph.D.
Manager, Psychology Professional Office
and Psychology Training Director

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Overview of the Training Program

APA Accreditation

The psychology internship program was site-visited by the American Psychological Association in April of 1982 and received full approval as a clinical/counseling training program. A recent re-accreditation site visit conducted in October of 2002 resulted in full APA approval. We are due to be site-visited again in the Fall of 2005.

Affirmative Action Statement

The Psychology Professional Office of the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System (VASLCHCS) actively supports and is in full compliance with the spirit and principle of Affirmative Action in the recruitment and selection of psychology interns. We provide equal opportunities in training for all qualified persons and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or age.

Questions About the VA Healthcare System

Prospective intern applicants may be unfamiliar with the Department of Veterans Affairs as a Healthcare System. It is important to note that on April 7, 1989, the "Veterans Administration," as this agency has always been known, became a Cabinet-level department with a new name – the Department of Veterans Affairs. As an abbreviation, "VA" should now be understood to represent "Veterans Affairs" and not "Veterans Administration." The following represent commonly asked questions about the VA. We hope that the answers will help you to become more familiar with VA.

Are all VA Medical Centers alike?

No. Each center, while being part of the largest health care delivery system in the free world, has its own character and specialty services.

Some VA Medical Centers have geriatric units, substance abuse units, and day hospitals, while others focus on psychiatric treatment, or

provide domiciliary care. You should read the brochure of each center carefully in order to understand the training opportunities available. Our center provides a full range of medical services in affiliation with the University of Utah Medical School. The VA Salt Lake City HCS is one of three designated organ transplantation centers in the VA system, is one of a few centers with its own Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) capabilities, and is the site of origin of many of the computer assisted psychological assessment packages now used throughout VA.

Are all patients seen at the VAMC men?

Although the majority of veterans are men, many veterans are women who seek services within all areas of mental health and medical treatment. Several of our psychology staff are involved with the Women's Clinic in providing priority services for women veterans who have a history of sexual abuse or harassment during their military service. Additionally, comprehensive treatment often consists of treating the family. Thus, it is not unusual for a VA psychologist to work with couples and children.

The SLC staff offers unique opportunities for increasing awareness of issues that arise in working with a population which is mostly men. Interested staff and interns meet to discuss such issues, as well as propose and implement changes designed to create a positive environment for both staff and patients.

Are most of the patients in VA chronic psychiatric patients?

Only a few VA facilities specialize in the treatment of chronic psychiatric patients. The VASLCHCS is an acute care facility with patients admitted for medical, surgical, neurological and mental health care. Many patients are seen as outpatients in a variety of clinics. Inpatient hospitalization rarely exceeds three weeks on the psychiatry units.

What role does VA play in training psychologists?

VA Medical Centers have been involved in the training of a large number of psychologists in the United States. VA is the largest single employer of psychologists in the world and the largest single employer of Psychology interns in the United States (over 350 intern positions per year). Our VASLCHCS staff plays a vital role in training Psychology interns and in academic teaching roles at universities in our region.

What is the quality of care and research provided in VA Medical Centers ?

VA has extensive Quality Assurance programs, internal and external audits and accreditation (e.g., Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations) and specialty accreditation such as that provided by APA. VA has the highest hiring standards for entry level psychologists of any agency in the country. Many prominent researchers are employed by VA. Two VA Researchers received Nobel prizes in a single year. VA supports a number of psychologists with distinguished research credentials as full-time Career Scientists. Psychologists in our service assigned to clinical/ counseling roles make significant research contributions in the areas of substance abuse, psychology in medicine, treatment of depression, neuro-psychology and computerized assessment. VA does not view research as separate from clinical practice but sees research and exploration as an integral part of innovative and effective treatment.

What additional learning experiences are available beyond the internship program itself?

VA has an extensive in-house education program. During the past year a number of training programs were presented in Salt Lake City. The faculty presenting these training programs are nationally prominent. SLC interns are eligible to attend many of these offerings. In addition, the

VASLCHCS is affiliated with the University of Utah Medical Center. Interns and staff attend University Grand Rounds in psychiatry, neurology, and medicine which are alternately held at the University campus and the VASLCHCS. Our extensive medical library provides either direct access or world-wide interlibrary loan access to printed and audio-visual materials.

General Information About the Psychology Professional Office and the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System

Under the direction of the Manager of the Psychology Professional Office, ten Ph.D. psychologists contribute psychological expertise to the programs outlined later in this handbook. The staff represent a wide variety of interests and theoretical orientations and contribute to both inpatient and outpatient programs. The size of the staff and the low turnover rate provide considerable program stability. Staff research is encouraged and many national and international journals publish research generated by VASLCHCS psychologists. Individual staff members are active in university teaching, state and national psychological organizations, and state and national scientific societies and agencies. The VASLCHCS is one of 172 VA Medical Centers and Healthcare systems serving veterans of military service throughout the United States. As a Dean's Committee Medical Center, the VASLCHCS is closely affiliated with the University of Utah School of Medicine, located less than one mile away.

The VASLCHCS comprises 22 buildings on 54 acres, as well as several community-based outpatient clinics (CBOC's) in communities throughout the intermountain west. Although described as a general medical and surgical hospital, the VASLCHCS also provides comprehensive services for patients needing psychiatric, neuro-psychiatric, and neurological care. Outpatient treatment is available through a variety of clinics. The VASLCHCS staff consists of over 1200 medical, para-medical, and administrative personnel. A well-equipped remodeled medical library and a number of research laboratories are also available.

Training Philosophy

The Salt Lake City HCS Psychology Professional Office is committed to providing high quality graduate training in psychology which includes in-depth training in applied skills and exposure to a variety of clinical and professional issues. The program provides interns with experiences which will make the transition from “student” to “professional” as smooth and orderly as possible. Interns receive a wide range of experiences designed to help them develop as independent professional psychologists. They have ample opportunity for mutual evaluation with the professional staff members. The internship is a training experience (not simply employment) where interns receive practical, service oriented experiences which add substantially to their academic training.

The foundation of our training philosophy is built around the following competencies:

1. Communication skills, written and oral.
2. Effective participation as a member of a clinical team.
3. Critical thinking and clinical reasoning, including the ability to reflect these skills in written chart notes.
4. Clinical interviewing.
5. Basic assessment tools, including psychological tests and tests of cognitive function.
6. Diagnosis and treatment planning.
7. Therapy (individual and group) in a variety of settings including substance abuse.
8. An understanding of organic mental disorders.
9. An understanding of major psychiatric disorders.
10. Ethical issues in practice.
11. Evidence of professional development.
12. Supervision skills.
13. Administrative skills.

Our staff will make every effort to insure that each intern has acquired these competencies by the time the internship year is complete.

Training Staff: Clinical Interests

DR. AIKINS: PTSD and the WWII/Korean veteran, assessment and treatment of former POW's, childhood trauma, and adult adjustment, long-term therapy, and chronic pain.

DR. ALLEN: Treatment of PTSD, psychological assessment, group psychotherapy.

DR. CHRISTENSEN: Psychological aspects of war/POW experience, trauma among older veterans.

DR. MADSEN: Long-term therapy, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, schizophrenia, memory.

DR. SIEBER: Neuropsychological assessment, adjustment to illness, geropsychology, interpersonal process psychotherapy.

DR. THORLEY: Personality disorders, substance abuse, relapse prevention.

DR. TODT: Psychological aspects of chronic mental illness, psychological intervention with somatoform disorders, interpersonal and dynamic psychotherapy.

DR. WEAVER: Computer applications and psychoeducational approaches.

Internship Structure

The internship year is a 12-month experience composed of two six-month rotations, Medical Psychology and Mental Health. Typically, half of the intern group starts the beginning of the year with Medical Psychology and the other half with Mental Health. At the beginning of March, the midway point of the year, each group moves on to the remaining rotation. On the Mental Health rotation interns will have an opportunity to experience both inpatient and outpatient services.

Mental Health: Interns are involved in both inpatient and outpatient mental health services throughout this six-month rotation. They are active members of interdisciplinary treatment teams on our Inpatient Psychiatric Unit, providing psychological

assessment, psychoeducation, and individual/group psychotherapy on an ongoing basis. In addition, interns are assigned a primary outpatient supervisor, who will provide supervision for individual therapy cases and will coordinate the intern's involvement in other training activities (e.g., psychoeducation, therapy groups, supervision of practicum students). Interns are encouraged to seek out training opportunities in general mental health, PTSD, and/or substance abuse treatment.

Medical Psychology: Interns are involved in a variety of inpatient and outpatient activities throughout this six-month rotation. Two months are spent on the Mental Health Consult Team, during which interns serve in a consultation-liaison role on our acute medicine units, and two months are spent on the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation team. In both of these inpatient medical settings, interns are members of interdisciplinary teams, providing psychological assessment, treatment, and consultation as appropriate. The remaining two months are spent evaluating and treating veterans in Geriatric Primary Care settings. In addition, throughout the full six months, interns are involved in providing psychological services to individuals referred from our medical clinics, including neuropsychological assessment, brief psychotherapy, and consultation.

Interns will find themselves working in an interdisciplinary setting which includes psychiatrists, social workers, psychiatric nurses and various non-graduate degree staff members. Interns also participate with non-psychiatric physicians and nurses in the delivery of comprehensive health care. All interns are supervised by psychologists, however, and the program emphasizes the unique contributions of professional psychology to the delivery of health care.

The internship program prepares psychologists capable of functioning in a responsible, professional manner in a wide range of medical and mental health settings. Interns planning academic and/or

research careers will find the applied experience of the internship invaluable.

The applicant should be aware that the entire VA system sometimes undergoes changes in response to federal funding, healthcare needs, and the more specific needs of our veterans. These changes can occur all the way from the local level to the entire system of VA Medical Centers and Health Care Systems. The VA system is currently in such a state of flux. Naturally, changes in the structure of the system often have an impact on the psychological services we provide to our patients. We mention this with the intention of being proactive. The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System has been and will continue to be a tertiary referral center. Beyond this, there is a trend in healthcare delivery in the VA system toward increasing outpatient services and treatment via Primary Care teams. If anything, we anticipate that any future changes affecting the Psychology interns would be in keeping with this trend. In coming months, it would not be surprising if we found ourselves retuning to a structure with more emphasis on primary care. However, we anticipate a continued presence in inpatient medical and psychiaatric settings as well. Should any significant changes occur during your application process, we would inform you as soon as we were able.

Intern Qualifications

Full-time internships are offered only to students in training at APA approved clinical or counseling psychology doctoral programs, PsyD programs, or ProSci programs (Clinical or Counseling Psychology tracks). Psychologists who are involved in an APA approved respecialization program in clinical or counseling psychology may also apply. VA regulations prohibit the training of doctoral-level psychologists from other specialties who are not involved in recognized respecialization programs.

Applicants must be citizens of the United States. A student applying for a full-time internship (see Application Procedures) must have completed a Master's degree (or equivalent in programs which do not require a Master's degree). There must be verification that all practica required by the parent

university have been completed. The letter from the Training Director of the student's university must state that it is reasonable to anticipate the student will receive the doctoral degree at the end of the internship year. (Students from programs in which the dissertation is completed the year following the internship may also apply.) Although completion of the dissertation is not required, intern applicants who are close to completion of their dissertation and who have completed several practica are given first consideration. There are currently six interns at the VASLCHCS. Since training funds are approved on a yearly basis, we cannot guarantee that we will have the same number of positions each year.

Research

Some interns are interested in conducting research during the course of the internship year. Although the primary focus of our training program is the development of applied skills, it is possible for interns to become involved in intern-initiated research projects.

The Manager of the Psychology Professional Office is ultimately responsible for all research conducted at the medical center by psychology interns. The Psychology Research Committee has been established to review proposals for research by Psychology staff or interns.

Dr. Steven Allen is the Chairperson of the Committee and Drs. Patrick Miller and Richard Weaver are members. Intern research projects require Training Committee and primary-supervisor approval. If the research involves the use of human subjects, the proposal will be forwarded to the Institutional Review Board of the University of Utah Medical School.

Interns who wish to do research will discuss their research ideas with potential supervisors and must be prepared to present their proposals to the Psychology Professional Office Research Committee during the first two months of the

internship. Although the review process can be time-consuming, it must be completed before data can be collected.

If a research project is to serve as the doctoral dissertation, we request that the proposal be reviewed by the Psychology Research Committee before it is reviewed by the doctoral committee at the sponsoring university. This policy helps prevent the awkward situation of an intern having his/her proposal approved by the university only to find that the medical center or Institutional Review Board will not accept it.

Application Procedure

The Psychology Internship Program at VASLCHCS is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and abides by all APPIC guidelines regarding intern recruitment and notification procedures.

Applications must be received by November 7, 2003.

A student from an APA-approved doctoral program wishing to apply for an internship should prepare the following materials:

- ☐ 1. Vita
- ☐ 2. Official university graduate transcripts
- ☐ 3. Three letters of professional recommendation
- ☐ 4. APPIC Application for Psychology Internship.

All application materials should be addressed to:

Patrick Miller, Ph.D.
Psychology Professional Office (116)
VA Salt Lake City Health Care System
500 Foothill Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84148
Phone: (801) 582-1565, ext. 4572

The starting date of the internship is August 23, 2004.

Recruitment Procedure

Even under the best of circumstances, the internship selection process induces anxiety. To reduce anxiety as much as possible, our recruitment procedures are detailed below.

1. Applications completed by the closing date will be reviewed and rated by the Selection Committee, with this stage being completed no later than four weeks after the closing date. File ratings will be used to determine which applicants will receive further consideration based on qualifications and “fit” with the program. All applicants will be notified as early as possible after the file review concerning their status.
2. Each applicant who remains under active consideration will be interviewed by members of the Selection Committee. In-person interviews will be conducted on two open house dates in January (January 9 & 16, 2004). Applicants who are unable to attend either of these dates are welcome to schedule telephone interviews during the month of January.
3. Prior to the APPIC submission date, the Training Committee meets and determines the rank ordering of applicants, based on file and interview ratings. The entire list of interviewed applicants is reviewed to ensure that all applicants have received fair and equal consideration.



Internship Training Sites

Mental Health: Inpatient & Outpatient

Inpatient Psychiatry Unit

Richard A. Weaver, Ph.D.

This 21-bed inpatient psychiatry program delivers crisis-oriented services to patients with a wide range of presenting problems. Patients represent all adult age groups and the opportunity for working with family members is available. The mean length of stay is 8 days.

Patients are assigned to one of two multidisciplinary treatment teams. The teams develop treatment plans in cooperation with the patients, selecting from a large number of program options both on and off the unit. Such options include individual and group therapy, medication, structured psycho-educational workshops, relaxation groups, recreational activities, and computer interaction using a system to help patients learn more about themselves.

The staff members of the Inpatient Psychiatry Unit have a heavy commitment to training. Students from each of the major disciplines (e.g., Psychology, Social Work, Nursing, Medicine) rotate through the unit. Students are exposed to many types of psychopathology in a short period of time. Diagnostic and treatment skills learned in an academic setting are quickly put to use. Psychology interns have an active role on the unit and have considerable freedom in choosing diagnostic and treatment activities that fit their interests. These options include:

- (1) Rotation through the two treatment teams and primary identification with one team;
- (2) Administration and interpretation of a broad spectrum of psychological assessment instruments, including personality (both objective and projective), and neuro-psychological screening instruments;

- (3) Consultation with members of other disciplines on the treatment teams;
- (4) An individual psychotherapy caseload;
- (5) Leading and co-leading interactional group therapy sessions;
- (6) Leading and co-leading specialized therapy groups in such areas as suicide prevention, anger management, post-traumatic stress disorders, and women's issues;
- (7) Participation in a psychoeducational model of inpatient treatment which includes classes on self-control, rational thinking, and effective communication; reading assignments; patient-computer interaction; homework assignments; and conducting "tutorial" sessions with patients;
- (8) Attending the in-service training programs of the other disciplines in such topics as psychopharmacology and ECT.

Outpatient Mental Health Services

The Outpatient Mental Health Services at the VA Salt Lake City Health Care System comprise a newly reorganized effort to consolidate and coordinate the services provided by the traditionally separate VA outpatient programs. Psychology interns will have the opportunity of working with supervising psychologists in a comprehensive and technologically sophisticated program of outpatient mental health services.

The population treated ranges from acute transient cases where the goal of treatment is short term crisis management to chronically mentally ill veterans who are in long term supportive case management. Interns will be involved with a full range of diagnostic cases, ranging from situational to severely impaired psychotic and/or organic disorders. Assessment experiences range from brief interview based triage situations to comprehensive psychological test based evaluations for differential diagnosis

and treatment planning. Interns will have the opportunity to provide brief and long term psychotherapy, they may co-lead group therapy sessions and teach psychoeducational modules. Treatment may be limited to the veteran or may involve an entire family system. Within the context of outpatient mental health services interns will work in a setting that interacts closely with inpatient treatment programs with the common goal of providing the veteran with the least restrictive level of care possible.

Outpatient Mental Health Services are interdisciplinary. In addition to working with several psychologists interns will have the opportunity to work with senior staff psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, and vocational rehabilitation specialists as well as interacting with their respective residents, interns and students. Interns participate in all aspects of the program. Opportunities will exist for involvement in treatment design, program management, statistical monitoring of critical elements in patient care, training activities both as participant and instructor.

The VASLCHCS has a long history of involvement with computer applications in mental health. The outpatient department has been designated as a test site for an automated medical record system. The project is a joint venture between Psychology and Psychiatry. Interns with interest in this area will find the system to be a fertile ground for innovations.

Psychotherapy Team

Thomas Aikins, Ph.D.

Ellen Todt, Ph.D.

The Psychotherapy Team provides treatment for patients with a variety of problems such as adjustment disorders, depression, anxiety, and schizophrenia. Thus, the length of treatment can vary from time-limited treatment for patients who have a good prognosis for improvement, to long term case management as a method of providing an alternative to psychiatric hospitalization.

The staff consists of psychologists, social workers, nurses, psychiatrists, as well as a case manager and vocational rehabilitation specialist. This multidisciplinary team works together to coordinate a variety of treatment modalities such as individual therapy, marital and family therapy, group therapies, medication management, and vocational rehabilitation.

Psychology interns can serve a vital role within the Psychotherapy Team and can become involved in any of these activities or may even decide to pursue ideas of their own.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team (PCT)

Steve Allen, Ph.D.

Phillip W. Christensen, Ph.D.

The PCT provides outpatient assessment, referral and treatment of PTSD for veterans and their partners or families. The program focuses on identifying and treating veterans suffering from PTSD who have not previously received treatment for PTSD. The PCT also provides follow-up care for those veterans who have completed an inpatient PTSD treatment program.

The multidisciplinary staff includes social work, nursing, substance abuse rehab, vocational rehab, psychiatry, and psychology. The PCT staff are strongly dedicated to providing education and

.....Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team (PCT) cont.

training in PTSD. In addition to psychology interns, the PCT frequently provides training experiences for senior psychiatry residents, master's level social work students, medical students and advanced practice nurses. PCT staff are involved in PTSD educational activities throughout the medical center and community. PCT staff may also facilitate workplace stress debriefings within the VASLCHCS.

The PTSD treatment program includes both group and individual treatment modalities. The strong group emphasis in treatment is implemented by means of psychoeducational and psychotherapy groups. The Human Relations group is designed to improve functioning in the areas of emotion management (especially anger, depression and guilt), effective interpersonal communications, intimacy and stress management. A cognitive-behavioral approach is frequently employed. The PTSD psychotherapy group follows a process-oriented (Yalom) model. Using the psychotherapy group as a model of typical interpersonal relationship patterns, veterans are able to enhance their awareness of their interpersonal patterns and to effect change based on group feedback. Other groups include multi-couples group, WWII-POW groups, and coping with PTSD group for partners of veterans.

Individual and couples approaches are also frequently employed in the PCT. Individual treatment modalities may include psychotherapy, hypnosis, biofeedback and relaxation training. Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprogramming (EMDR) and trauma "focus" work may be used in selected cases.

Some veterans have also participated in Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) as an adjunctive PTSD treatment.

Patients treated in the PCT are primarily male Vietnam veterans although opportunities exist for treatment experiences with females, children,

teenagers, young adults, and veterans of World War II, Korea, Desert Storm and former Prisoners of War.

Interns on the PCT have opportunities in assessment and diagnosis of PTSD; group, couples, family, and individual treatments; and research. Current research projects include neuroimaging in PTSD patients, genetics of PTSD and alcoholism, physiological arousal in PTSD, and assessment of PTSD.

North Star Substance Abuse Treatment Program

Warren Thorley, Ph.D.

Research conducted in a variety of clinical settings has indicated that the substance abuse disorders are the second (just behind affective disorders) most frequent diagnoses. It is difficult to imagine a treatment setting in which a psychologist would not be required to evaluate and treat substance abuse. Annual census studies performed by VA also indicate that alcohol dependence and abuse are the most frequent problems of veterans, having been diagnosed in 25% + of all patients, regardless of the presenting complaint at admission. For Vietnam-era veterans, the incidence rate of substance abuse disorders has climbed to 38%.

A very large proportion of professional psychology positions in the VA system and in other mental health settings is in substance abuse treatment. Virtually all of our psychology interns trained in substance abuse have been successful finding employment upon completion of their training.

North Star Substance Abuse Treatment consists of three programs offering treatment for veterans with an identified alcohol and/or drug problem. The "General Outpatient Program" offers veterans the opportunity to participate in substance abuse treatment at the ASAM Level I treatment intensity. Patients complete an intake assessment,

.....North Star Substance Abuse Treatment Program cont.

participate in psychoeducational and support groups, and see their therapist for individual counseling. The “Intensive Outpatient Program” is an eight-week, 32 session evening program offered between 6:30 - 9:00 p.m., Monday-Thursday, followed by a four-month Wednesday evening aftercare group. This program represents an ASAM Level II.1 intensity of service. The “Eagle’s Nest Program” is a 15 bed, 28-day residential program in which patients participate in day and evening psychoeducational and process groups, individual therapy, vocational counseling, recreational therapy, and family counseling. This program represents the ASAM Level III.5 level of care.

The substance abuse staff are a multidisciplinary team comprised of a physician assistant, a pharmacist, a psychologist, social workers, addiction therapists, psychology technicians, a registered nurse, and a vocational rehabilitation specialist. Most staff have involvement in aspects of all three programs. The basic treatment approach is broad spectrum with an emphasis on a cognitive-behavioral Relapse Prevention model.

Each staff member (including interns) serves as a primary therapist for multiple outpatients. It is the therapist’s responsibility to assess current functioning and to design and implement an individualized treatment plan for each patient with the goal of assisting the veteran to develop those skills necessary for independent and responsible drug-free functioning. Interns are expected to become involved in individual and group therapy as well as to assume responsibilities for other aspects of the clinic’s operations, depending on individual interests. There is ample opportunity to use formal assessment skills, pursue special clinical interests, and expand clinical experience.

Medical Psychology

Janet Madsen, Ph.D.
Patrick Miller, Ph.D.
Kimberly O. Sieber, Ph.D.

This rotation includes training in behavioral medicine and neuropsychology. Interns function in a consultation-liaison role on inpatient medical/surgical units and as members of interdisciplinary teams, consult on patients referred from various clinics, and provide mental health services to Geriatric Primary Care clinics. In these settings, interns work with psychological aspects of illness and health, including: treatment adherence; coping with chronic illness; improving health behaviors (e.g., smoking cessation, weight management, stress management); and management of anxiety, depression, and pain. Cognitive/neuropsychological assessment is a frequently requested service to assist medical providers with diagnostic questions and treatment recommendations.

Intern training experiences on this rotation occur in three settings: Mental Health Consultation Team, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service and Geriatric Primary Care. All interns spend time in each of these settings.

Inpatient Mental Health Consultation Team (MH Consult)

The MH Consult team is an interdisciplinary team consisting of Psychiatry, Psychology, Social Work, and Clinical Pharmacy. This team provides mental health services to patients within inpatient medical settings including Acute Medicine, Surgery, Neurology, and Intensive Care Units. The emphasis on this team is in applying a consult-liaison model with patients referred by physicians and other health care providers. Common referral issues include: questionable cognitive impairment, adjustment to illness, evaluation/management of psychiatric symptoms (i.e., depression, anxiety, psychosis), and substance abuse/detox. Psychology interns serve as a member of this

interdisciplinary team, participating in patient rounds, conducting psychological/neuropsychological assessment, and providing supportive therapy as appropriate.

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

This small (6-bed) specialty unit provides inpatient rehabilitation to patients with a variety of disabling diagnoses/illnesses. Including: stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, amputation, pain syndromes, severe deconditioning/debility secondary to prolonged illness. Treatment is provided within a multidisciplinary model by a team consisting of representatives from the disciplines of physical medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech pathology, social work, and psychology.

Psychology interns serve as full members of the Rehab Team, providing cognitive/mood screening, brief psychotherapy, and behavioral management interventions as appropriate.

Geriatric Primary Care

The VA Salt Lake City Health Care System is one of several VA's with a specially funded Geriatrics Research Education and Clinical Center (GRECC). The purpose of the GRECCs is to coordinate and facilitate research, education, and clinical activities in the growing specialty of geriatric health care. Our GRECC provides stipends to students, interns, and residents from several health care disciplines, including psychology. During this mini-rotation, interns see patients in a weekly Geriatric/Med/Psych clinic, and participate on the multidisciplinary Home Based Primary Care team. This program provides health care services to patients and caregivers in their homes.

Affiliated Programs

Operation Outreach Vet Center Readjustment Counseling Service

1354 East 3300 South, Suite 110
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

The Readjustment Counseling Service is a program legislated by Congress on June 1979 (PL96-22). The mission of the program is to reduce the incidence of readjustment problems among veterans and their families within local communities with a program consisting of readjustment counseling, referral, follow-up and outreach services. It is the responsibility of the center staff to provide an on-going spectrum of readjustment counseling services to:

1. Assist veterans in reducing symptoms of delayed stress syndrome. These symptoms include feelings of alienation, depression, guilt, rejection and doubts about the value and purpose of life.
2. Assist veterans who display lowgrade motivational or behavioral impairment which interferes with their job and educational performance, interpersonal relationships or overall ability to cope with problems encountered in daily life.
3. Assist in crisis by assessing social determinants of stress and using family and community intervention to the maximum.
4. Provide appropriate treatment in outlying areas by using selected community mental health units equipped to deal with and understand special problems of those suffering from symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Some examples of treatment modalities employed by Vet Center staff are: Rap groups (including significant others), family counseling, individual and couple counseling, educational and career counseling, vocational counseling, self-help groups, stress management (including biofeedback), life skills training, crisis intervention, suicide prevention, role modeling and veterans benefits guidance.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program

Steven L. Jackson, Ph.D.
Coordinator, Vocational Rehabilitation

The primary purpose of the Vocational Rehabilitation Program is to promote the vocational and community adjustment of veterans we serve. The Vocational Rehabilitation Program endeavors to assess each inpatient and outpatient veteran who has a vocational concern and to provide vocational rehabilitation assistance to those with identified problems. Vocational rehabilitation specialists work with the multidisciplinary treatment teams to seek to insure that vocational rehabilitation efforts are coordinated with the other parts of a patient's treatment plan.

Although vocational rehabilitation specialists provide services to patients from a variety of clinics, most patients served have psychiatric and/or substance abuse problems. Some of the services offered by the program or available through referral to community agencies include vocational assessment and evaluation, vocational counseling, GED preparation and testing, work adjustment evaluation and training, referral to vocational training programs, job seeking skills training, and job placement assistance. To help patients reach their vocational goals, vocational rehabilitation staff members maintain working relationships with representatives of several agencies (e.g., State Division of Rehabilitation Services, State Department of Workforce Services).

Many patients benefit from the VA therapeutic work programs, Incentive Therapy and Compensated Work Therapy. Therapeutic work assignments are available in many areas of the medical center. Before assigning patients to work areas, vocational rehabilitation specialists consider the abilities and interests of patients. The therapeutic work programs afford opportunities to evaluate patients' work behavior, and they give patients opportunities to improve their work habits and work skills. Some patients who participate in work therapy are not candidates for competitive employment. However, staff members mainly focus their efforts on helping

.....Vocational Rehabilitation Program cont.

patients who potentially can make the transition from nonemployment to competitive employment.

Homeless Program

The Homeless Program provides extensive outreach, evaluation, treatment, referrals and ongoing case management to homeless veterans with mental health problems (including substance abuse). The program staff conducts outreach to identify homeless veterans and performs an initial psychosocial evaluation in a number of community based sites that traditionally provide services to homeless individuals. Staff utilize both VA and community based resources to provide needed services including treatment. As clinically indicated, the program places veterans in one of several contracted community based residential facilities for longer-term substance abuse treatment. The program also has fifty HUD/VASH section eight housing vouchers and two full-time staff to place mentally ill program clients into subsidized housing. The program provides a continuum of evaluation, support, and care to assist clients in achieving their highest level of functioning and assist veterans in assessing and utilizing needed VA and community resources.

Special Training Opportunities

The VASLCHCS offers unique training opportunities to its psychology interns. Interns are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities. Recent offerings include:

1. Psychiatry Grand Rounds.
2. Neurology Grand Rounds.
3. Interdisciplinary Case Conferences.
4. Brain Pathology Conference.
5. Regional Medical Education Center Conferences (e.g., Neuropsychology, DSM, Violence, MMPI-2).
6. Special Speaker Workshops. Occasionally, funding makes it possible to invite nationally

recognized clinicians and researchers to VASLCHCS. Typically, these have been scheduled every one to two years. Past speakers have included Theodore Millon, Howard Gardner, Albert Ellis, Sol Garfield, John Graham, David Burns, Neil Jacobson, and David Barlow.

Specialty Seminars

Mondays from 10:30 to noon are reserved throughout the year for a series of specialty seminars conducted by psychology staff members and other professionals. Seminars vary from one to six sessions. Topics vary from year to year since interns play a part in planning the program. The seminars conducted in recent years included:

1. Testing Review,
Pat Miller, Ph.D.
Kim Sieber, Ph.D.
Warren Thorley, Ph.D.
2. Introduction to the VA,
Pat Miller, Ph.D.
3. Clinical Judgement,
Tom Aikins, Ph.D.
4. The POW Experience
Tom Aikins, Ph.D.
5. Writing Neuropsychological Reports
Kim Sieber, Ph.D.
6. PTSD,
Steve Allen, Ph.D.
7. Projectives,
Phil Christensen, Ph.D.
8. Hypnosis,
Steve Allen, Ph.D.
9. Geriatric Mental Health Issues,
Pat Miller, Ph.D.
10. Schizophrenia,
Richard Weaver, Ph.D.
11. Theories of Personality,
Warren Thorley, Ph.D.
12. Dialectical Behavior Therapy,
Janet Madsen, Ph.D.



Training Policies

General Policies

All internship appointments are for a continuous 12-month period. The stipend of \$18,750 is paid in equal installments over 26 bi-weekly pay periods. Due to an IRS ruling in 1982, stipends are not tax free; they are taxed as regular income. Both federal and state taxes are deducted.

Interns are not covered by civil service retirement, but are eligible for federal employee group life insurance and health benefits.

Interns who work 40 hours per week can easily fulfill their commitment and still have ample time for vacations and sick leave. Interns will be expected to continue with their clinical responsibilities through the last full week of the internship.

A five day orientation is conducted at the beginning of each internship year.

Interns may apply for limited hourly credit for attendance at national and regional professional meetings. These requests are made through the primary supervisor to the Training Committee and reviewed on an individual basis.

Psychology Training Committee Responsibilities

The Manager of the Psychology Professional Office has final responsibility for the integrity and quality of the psychology training program. The Manager has delegated administrative responsibility for the training program to the Psychology Training Committee. Committee members are Drs. Aikins, Allen, Christensen, Jackson, Madsen, Miller, Sieber, Thorley, Todt and Weaver.

The Psychology Training Committee has the following duties:

1. Recruit and select interns. Interested interns are invited to participate in this process to the extent of reviewing application files, meeting with applicants and providing feedback to the Training Committee.
2. Plan the training activities for each year. Following a review of the anticipated training budget, determine the allocation of interns and designate professional psychologists as supervisors.
3. Prepare a Training Handbook describing the internship opportunities.
4. Evaluate the training program each year with the assistance of supervisors, interns and the intern representatives.
5. Maintain liaison with the universities of the interns.

Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Coordinate the training of the interns with appropriate unit personnel, e.g., physicians, nurses, unit chiefs.
2. Provide a minimum of two hours of individual supervision per week for each assigned intern and maintain a written record of the supervision. Use and maintain samples of audio and video recordings for supervision as appropriate.
3. Co-sign all written records of interns such as progress notes and psychological assessment reports.
4. Assure that interns are familiar with and adhere to ethical standards for psychologists. Also assure that they are sensitive to the image of Veterans Affairs and do nothing that would bring discredit to themselves or to Veterans Affairs.
5. Provide guidance to interns pertaining to legal matters, coordination with other units and programs in the VASLCHCS and other community agencies.
6. Hold individual evaluation sessions with assigned interns as needed and at least once per semester and maintain written records of evaluations.
7. Forward a letter of evaluation to intern's department (after six months and upon completion of internship). Maintain written and oral communication with the intern's parent university as a necessary and required part of the training relationship.
8. Function as liaison between interns and other staff members.

Intern Responsibilities

1. Schedule working hours with supervisor and inform Psychology Professional Office of any leave taken.
2. Participate in training programs and individual evaluations.
3. Keep supervisor informed of actions taken with each patient. Such interventions as crisis visits, home visits, letters, and court appearances require prior approval by the supervisor.
4. Maintain medical records for assigned patients. Have all written information pertaining to patients co-signed by supervisor.
5. Be familiar with and comply with the Ethical Standards for Psychologists as published by the American Psychological Association.
6. Coordinate any and all research activities which use VA resources and/or subjects with assigned supervisor who will assure that VA research requirements are met and that the activity is coordinated with the Research Committee.
7. Develop, present, and evaluate a formal series of intern case conferences.
8. Develop an intern organization and elect a Chief Intern.
9. Evaluate supervisors using an intern-designed evaluation form.



Psychology Staff

Thomas R. Aikins, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic

Length of Service: 1973

Degree: University of Utah

Licensed: Utah

Faculty Appointments: Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Utah

Professional Organizations: American Psychological Association; Utah Psychological Association; American Pain Society

Research Interests and Publications: Therapist Training; Behavioral Management of Depression; Group Psychotherapy; Brief Therapy; MMPI; Pain Management; Hypnosis, CISTD

Steven N. Allen, Ph.D.

Position: Coordinator, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Clinical Team

Length of Service: 1990

Degree: University of Wyoming

Licensed: California, Utah

Faculty Appointments: Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology; Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Utah

Professional Organizations: American Psychological Association; Utah Psychological Association; International Society for the Study of Traumatic Stress

Research Interests and Publications: PTSD; Group Psychotherapy; Substance Abuse; Hypnosis; Assessment

Phillip W. Christensen, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist,

Length of Service: 1979

Degree: Texas Tech University

Faculty Appointments: Clinical Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology, Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychology, Clinical Instructor, Department of Psychiatry, University of Utah

Research Interests and Publications: Computers in Mental Health Treatment; MMPI; Projective Techniques; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders; Belief Systems and Self Instructional Speech

Steven L. Jackson, Ph.D.

Position: Coordinator, Vocational Rehabilitation

Length of Service: 1983

Degree: University of Utah

Licensed: Utah

Faculty Appointment: Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Utah

Professional Organizations: National Rehabilitation Association; Utah Rehabilitation Association

Research Interests and Publications: Vocational Assessment and Treatment

Janet G. Madsen, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Consultation and Referral Team

Length of Service: 1995

Degree: University of Utah

Faculty Appointments: Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Utah

Professional Organizations: American Psychological Association; Utah Psychological Association; American Psychological Society

Research Interests and Publications: Implicit and Explicit Memory, Assessment, Geriatrics, Personality Disorders, Brief Psychotherapy

Patrick J. Miller, Ph.D.

Position: Manager, Psychology Professional Office; Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Consultation/Referral Team

Length of Service: 1983

Degree: Washington State University

Licensed: Utah

Faculty Appointments: Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Psychiatry, University of Utah

Professional Organizations: American Psychological Association

Research Interests and Publications: Brain Injury Impairment; Factors in Relapse; Relapse Prevention

.....Psychology Staff cont.

Kimberly O. Sieber, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Team,
Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
Length of Service: 2001
Degree: University of Missouri, St. Louis
Licensed: Utah
Faculty Appointments: Adjunct Faculty, Dept. of
Educational Psychology, University of Utah;
Associate Instructor, Westminster College
Professional Organizations: American Psychological
Association, Utah Psychological Association
Professional Interests and Publications: Self-
Concept Across the Adult Lifespan; Late-Life
Depression; Behavioral Medicine Interventions
in Long-Term Care Settings; Neuropsychological
assessment of Dementia

Warren Thorley, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, North Star
Substance Abuse Treatment Program
Length of Service: 1988
Degree: Texas Tech University
Licensed: Utah
Research Interests: Personality Disorders; Millon
Clinical Multiaxial Inventory

Ellen H. Todt, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic
Length of Service: 1983
Degree: Brigham Young University Licensed: Utah,
Texas
Professional Organizations: Association for
Advancement of Behavior Therapy; Utah
Psychological Association
Professional Interests and Publications: Eating
Disorders; Assessment and Management of
Pain; Psychological Contributions to the
Management of the Chronically Mentally Ill

Richard A. Weaver, Ph.D.

Position: Staff Psychologist, Inpatient Psychiatry
Unit
Length of Service: 1981
Degree: Brigham Young University
Licensed: Utah, Texas
Faculty Appointments: Clinical Assistant Professor
of Educational Psychology; Adjunct Faculty,
Department of Psychiatry, University of Utah
Research Interests and Publications:
Psychoeducational Approaches; Computer
Applications

Affiliated Staff

Dale Cannon, Ph.D.

Position: Associate Chief for Informatics, Mental
Health Strategic Health Group
Length of Service: 1970
Degree: University of Utah
Professional Organizations: Fellow, Division of
Clinical Psychology, American Psychological
Association; American Medical Informatics
Association; American Telemedicine
Association; Past President, Association of VA
Chief Psychologists
Research Interests and Publications: Alcohol
Treatment Outcome; Clinical Practice Guidelines



Utah and Salt Lake City

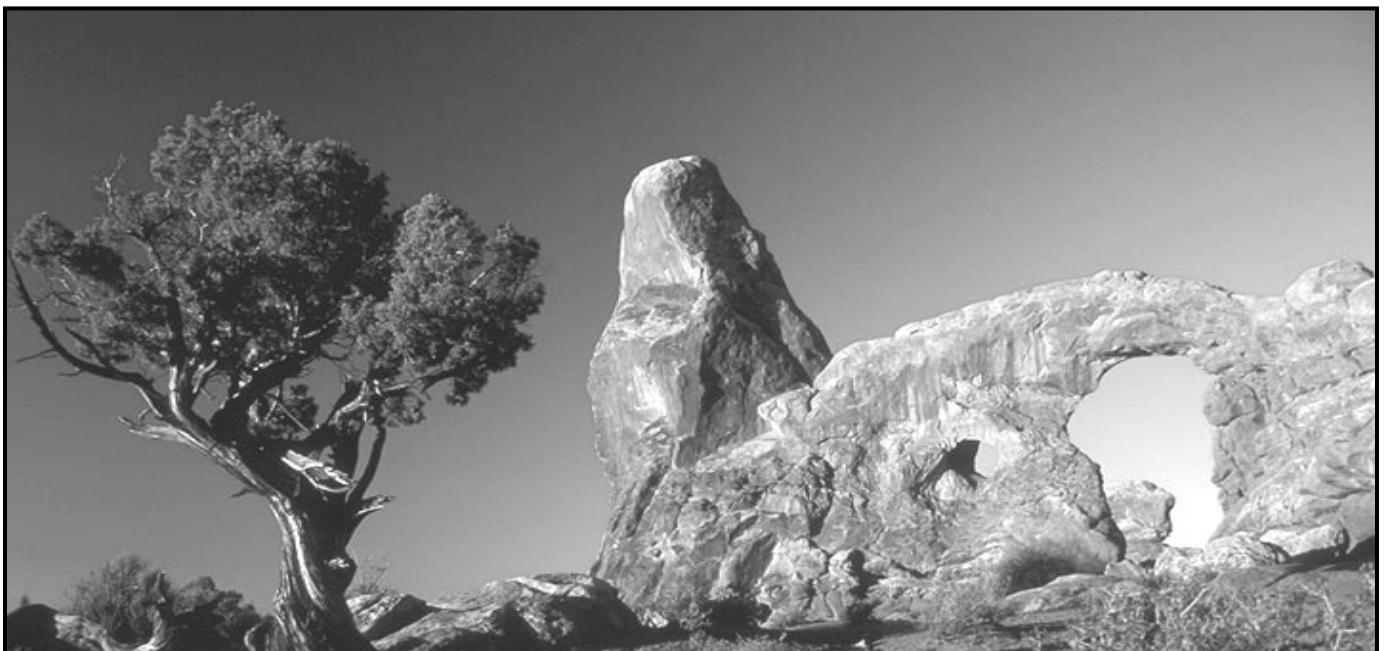
If you are unfamiliar with Salt Lake City or the State of Utah, the following information may be useful to you:

Most of Utah lies on a plateau above 4,000 feet in elevation. The Wasatch and High Plateau Ranges of the Rocky Mountains span the heart of the state for 300 miles from north to south. To the east is the Uintah Range, Utah's most rugged and highest mountain wilderness. To the east and south is the Colorado River Plateau with its famed red rock country, accented by snow-capped mountains and ten national parks and monuments. To the west, Utah's Rocky Mountains slide into the state's major communities and farmland and then roll away to the remote mountain ranges of the Great Basin Desert. Carving a large slice out of northwestern Utah are the Great Salt Lake and the Bonneville Salt Flats.

The population of Utah is about 2,000,000. In land area, Utah ranks 11th in size among the states with 84,990 square miles. For the outdoor recreational enthusiast, Utah is truly a paradise. Utah has over 1,000 lakes, rivers and streams. Campers and backpackers may choose from over

375 public and private campgrounds throughout the state. Twenty three percent of the state is administered by the National Forest Service. There are hundreds of miles of back-country roads and trails, many of which are accessible only to hardy backpackers. Jeeping, sailing, wind surfing, kayaking, rock climbing and mountain biking are extremely popular during the warmer months of the year (April through October). The sport of whitewater river running began in Utah and there are over 400 miles of raftable rivers. Utah ranks 6th in the nation in surface-areas of boatable waters within its boundaries. Utah has 16 ski resorts, 11 of which are within an hour's drive from Salt Lake City. Snowfall averages more than 500 inches each winter at these 11 resorts. The light powder that covers the slopes is often referred to as "The Greatest Snow on Earth." Ideal terrain for cross-country skiing and snowmobiling is within easy reach as well.

Utah has the distinction of being home to five national parks (distances from Salt Lake City): Arches National Park (232 miles), Bryce Canyon National Park (256 miles), Canyonlands National Park (249 miles), Capitol Reef National Park (229 miles), and Zion National Park (321 miles). Utah





is also home to seven national monuments — Cedar Breaks, Dinosaur, Hovenweep, Natural Bridges, Rainbow Bridge, Timpanogos Cave, and the new Grand Staircase-Escalante. Two national recreation areas can be found within the state. Flaming Gorge is one of the largest freshwater lakes in America and has excellent power-boating, fishing, water skiing and parasailing. Glen Canyon contains Lake Powell, the second-largest man made reservoir in the world. Lake Powell is 200 miles long, contains almost 2,000 miles of sandstone shoreline and offers superb fishing, boating, scuba diving, water skiing, parasailing and swimming.

The population of the Salt Lake Valley is growing at a rate of 2% per year and is in excess of 700,000. The temperature on an average summer day will rise past 90 and cool into the 50's at night. In the winter, the average daytime highs are in the 30's. Salt Lake City receives a moderate amount of snowfall during the winter months. The Great Salt Lake, stretching 80 miles to the north and 35 miles wide, lies 17 miles

west of the city and is popular for sailboating. The Salt Lake Valley is bisected by the Jordan River and the Jordan River State Parkway is popular for canoeing. The eastern side of the valley is bordered by the alpine forest and snow-capped peaks of the Wasatch National Forest. Seven major canyons surround the valley, making day hiking and picnicking easily accessible.

Salt Lake is a montage of modern highrises, commercial centers, unique sightseeing attractions, historic sites, dozens of excellent restaurants, beautiful shopping malls, and classic old buildings. Salt Lake is home to four professional sports teams —“Utah Jazz” Basketball (NBA), “Utah Grizzlies” Hockey (IHL), “Utah Starzz Basketball (WNBA), and “Salt Lake Buzz” Triple A Baseball. Twelve public golf courses are within 30 minutes of the downtown area. The city is home to three nationally acclaimed ballet/dance companies, as well as the Utah Opera Company and many fine art and historical museums. The Utah Symphony is world renowned and performs 260 concerts yearly. The orchestra frequently records with the world famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

With its commitment to young athletes and many facilities already in place, Salt Lake City was host to the Olympic Winter Games, 2002.

The Delta Center hosts everything from professional sports events to national rodeos and rock concerts. Salt Lake is also home to a nationally recognized planetarium, zoo and aviary. Salt Lake City, where the first playhouse west of the Mississippi was built in 1852, also has several fine professional theatres. Salt Lake is known as a city with a cosmopolitan atmosphere and small-town friendliness.

Further information may be obtained by writing to:

Utah Travel Council
Council Hall
Capitol Hill
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114

Notes:

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